REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Staiger, U.S. Patent No. 3,619,478.

The Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

As now amended, the Applicant's invention is directed to a reusable pin support structure which comprises an upper apertured foil, a lower apertured foil and means for maintaining the foils in spaced apart relationship wherein the apertures of the foils are in registration. A plurality of pins secured to the lower foil, and which pass through an aperture and the upper foil along with means for fixedly securing the pins in the lower foil.

The Applicant's invention is for use in pc board assembly or in electronic components mounted on both sides of the board. After components are mounted on the first side, the board is flipped and additional components are mounted on the second side. Once all the components are mounted, the fixture is processed and when production is completed, the pins are removed and the board may be used again. The Applicant's fixture incorporates many advantages over the prior art. First the board is reusuable. Also, since the holes in the foils are in registration, it allows easy assembly compared to the prior art methods in which pins are blindly inserted. The board includes a high density of holes of 0.13 inch pitch verses a 0.4 inch pitch for prior art plates, which allows pin support locations to be more easily located and precisely placed. Because the pins must be located at places on side 1 of the board which lacks components, the Applicant's invention offers a much greater chance of locating onto an existing "bare board" location. This reduces the total time consumed during the pin fixture and increases the effect of support due to the ability to better disperse support locations and not being left without a suitable

spot to locate a pin. Additionally, the fixture weighs approximately five pounds as compared to the twenty pounds of the competing prior art boards. When using the Applicant's invention, a typical set up time includes 10 minutes versus 30 minutes for prior art methods.

On the other hand, Staiger '478 is directed to a method of permanently fixing two conductive elements using an intermediate aperatured array of context. A specially designed aperature is not designed to be viewed through as in the Applicant's invention. It must be stressed that this Staiger '478 discloses a permanent attachment method to join two conducting circuits using an apertured foil. It does not take on the function or form of the Applicant's invention including permanent joining of Staiger '478 versus the reusable structure of the Applicant's invention and the ability to see through the apertures of the Applicant's invention whereas it is not possible to see through the Staiger '478 fixture. There is no discussion or suggestion in the Staiger '478 patent that the pins may be removed and rearranged.

Thus, the Applicant believes that the Staiger '478 patent does not anticipate the Applicant's invention.

Claims 3-4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Staiger '478.

The Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

As independent claims are patently distinguishable from the prior art of record, the dependent claims should be patentable as well.

From reviewing the International Preliminary Examination Report, prepared by the United States Patent and Trademark Office, the Applicant has noted that previously a U.S. Examiner has stated that claims 1-6 meet the requirements of novelty, inventive step and

industrial applicability because the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest a thin support structure having upper and lower aperature foils maintain in a space relationship with a plurality of pins each having the support end and a base end, the support end passing through an aperature and the upper foil and the base end resting against a backing plate. This report includes the Staiger '478 patent.

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that the amended claims and the claims dependent there from are in proper form. The Applicants respectfully contend that Staiger, U.S. Patent No. 3,619,478, does not anticipate the claimed invention under the provisions of 35 U.S.C. §112 or 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). Thus, claims 1-3 and 5-6 are considered to be patently distinguishable over the prior art of record.

The application is now considered to be in condition for allowance, and an early indication of same is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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